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C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 001837

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/13/2017
TAGS: MO
SUBJECT: MOROCCO EXPRESSES SYMPATHY/SOLIDARITY WITH ALGERIA
AFTER BLAST

Classified By: POLCOUNS Craig M. Karp for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Widespread Moroccan media coverage of Tuesday's bombings in Algiers noted King Mohamed VI's telephone call to President Bouteflika, expressing personal condolence for the tragedy. The King also made a public statement condemning the bombings and expressing Morocco's sympathy and solidarity with the Algerian people, adding that he "considered Algeria's security to be linked to the security of the region." Other press reporting darkly harbingered Algeria's reentry into an era of violence--alluding to the 1990s when salafist jihadi violence in Algeria peaked.

¶2. (C) In Embassy follow-up calls to the MFA, Senior PM and CT contact Karim Halim underscored the King's message of solidarity with Algeria in combating terrorist threats but demurred when asked if the event might provide an opening for increased CT cooperation with Algeria. He stated that their cooperation was good and that sufficient channels of communication already existed.

¶3. (C) Comment: We assess that Morocco's expressions of solidarity with Algeria and view of terrorism as a common regional threat as sincere. Even though this attack took place in Algiers, Morocco likely views al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)--the widely suspected perpetrators of the attacks--as capable of launching, or at least facilitating, similar attacks in Morocco, despite its present inclination to concentrate its efforts in Algiers.

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